

Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force their stations to air an anti-Kerry documentary days before the election is a clear example of the dangers of media consolidation.

Sinclair uses the public airwaves free of charge, and is obligated by law to serve the public interest. But when large companies control the airwaves, we get more of what's good for the bottom line and less of what we need for our democracy. Instead of something produced at "News Central" far away, it's more important that we see real people from our own communities and more substantive news about issues that matter. It is obvious that the material Sinclair intends to broadcast is not the slightest bit news material. This is the only way that the republican party can attempt counter the unexpected amount of attention paid to Michael Moore's documentary this summer and now to the release of his DVD. As citizens we get slammed enough with useless campaign ads. The last thing we need is an hour + long campaign commercials, forced down our throats by local broadcasters before election day. This is not news, it is propaganda. Is this democracy? The de-regulation of media will ultimately defeat itself.

Sinclair's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard. Thank you.